

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, UK/ XL

SUBJECT: RESULTS OF VISIT OF JUNIOR MINISTER TO

ANGUILLA, ST. KITTS AND JAMAICA

REF: LONDON 11196

1. ON SEPT 16, EMBOFF DISCUSSED WITH FCO REPS RESULTS OF RECENT VISIT BY JUNIOR MINISTER AT FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE, JOAN LESTOR, TO ANGUILLA, ST. KITTS AND JAMAICA (REFTEL). FCO REPS WERE YOUNG AND ALLEN FROM CARIBBEAN AND WEST INDIAN DEPARTMENTS, AND ATWELL FROM NEWS DEPARTMENT, WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED MISS LESTOR. MAIN PURPOSE OF LESTOR'S VISIT WAS TO LOOK FOR SOME COMPROMISE FORMULA FOR BRINGING ANGUILLA BACK INTO ASSOCIATION WITH ST. KITTS AND NEVIS; BRITISH HAD NO SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS TO MAKE ON THEIR OWN. ATWELL COMMENTED THAT BRITISH WERE STRUCK BY CLIMATE OF FRIENDLINESS AND PATIENCE THEY FOUND, WHICH CONTRASTED NOTABLY WITH SITUATION IN 1969.

2. IN ANGUILLA MISS LESTOR MET WITH GOVERNOR, WITH MEMBERS OF COUNCIL, AND PRIVATELY WITH WEBSTER. ANGUILLANS WERE AS ADAMANT AS EVER IN REFUSING TO COUNTENANCE FURTHER ASSOCIATION WITH ST. KITTS, AND NEVIS. WHILE WANTING

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GREATER DEGREE OF SELF-GOVERNMENT, THEY ALSO WISHED TO

MAINTAIN THEIR CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH UK. CONCERNING FUTURE, THEY WERE VAGUE AND POINTED OUT TO BRITISH THEY HAD MUCH MORE IN COMMON WITH US AND BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS AND PUERTO RICO THAN THEY HAVE WITH ST. KITTS AND NEVIS.

3. LEADERS IN ST. KITTS DEMONSTRATED A FLEXIBLE AND PATIENT ATTITUDE. BRADSHAW NOTABLY PREPARED TO EXERCISE PATIENCE AND IS THINKING ABOUT SUGGESTIONS FOR GREATER DEVOLUTION OF POWER. AT SAME TIME HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT SECESSIONIST TENDENCIES IN NEVIS AND EFFECT ANY SETTLEMENT WITH ANGUILLA WILL HAVE FOR SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT IN NEVIS.

4. PRIOR TO RETURNING TO UK, MISS LESTOR WENT TO JAMAICA WHERE SHE DISCUSSED RESULTS OF HER VISIT WITH DUDLEY THOMPSON. JAMAICANS EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER ANGUILLAN SITUATION AND STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF AMICABLE SOLUTION THAT WOULD DISCOURAGE SECESSIONIST TENDENCIES.

5. NET RESULT OF MISSION WAS THAT BRITISH FEEL TIME PRESSURES NOT AS IMPORTANT AS BEFORE, BUT THAT SOLUTION TO ANGUILLAN PROBLEM IS NO NEARER. NO ONE SEEMS TO HAVE ANY IDEAS ON HOW TO PERSUADE ANGUILLA TO RETURN TO THE ST. KITTS-NEVIS FOLD.

6. FCO OFFICIALS ALSO RAISED QUESTION OF NEW VISA REGULATIONS FOR ANGUILLAN WORKERS IN US VIRGIN ISLANDS. THEY ESTIMATE THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 2,000 OF THEM AND EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF THEIR REMITTANCES TO ANGUILLAN ECONOMY. DUE TO LOSSES FROM TOURIST BUSINESS THIS YEAR, REMITTANCES HAVE BECOME EVEN MORE IMPORTANT. AFTER NOTING THAT MATTER HAD ALREADY BEEN RAISED WITH DEPARTMENT BY BRITISH EMBASSY WASHINGTON, THEY SAID THAT A WRITTEN REPRESENTATION IS BEING PREPARED IN ANGUILLA AND WILL BE FORWARDED TO WASHINGTON ASAP.

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